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That is nothing. That man is far down below in the deep water with his ranga, with his wongar and his old marikmo." 775

The soul of the dead (bir-im-bir) then returns to its totem and the totem lives in the sacred narra well. This is true for both men and women.

A Warumeri clansman was unconscious and near death. The relatives sang the garma sea-way (a cycle of songs about the sea and those totems which are connected with it). While they sang, it was thought, the spirit of marikmo was listening to the song. They then sang crayfish, which is a Warumeri totem. The hand of the dying one moved convulsively like a crayfish. They sang whale, also the clan's totem, and the person dying kicked in imitation of a whale. This meant he was going to die, and he was telling his people. He wanted them to sing his song, it was believed, so that his marikmo and old gatu (father's father's father) would know and come to him. 763 533

The dying one stiffened and was quiet. He was dead according to tribal thought, although his heart beat. "I see that go," one relative said about the heart of the dying man, "and I knew he was dead, but that his marikmo was looking out for him. I could see that because that old man marikmo moved inside his heart. He was taking that spirit back to the Warumeri well." 763

After death and before the burial ceremony, the symbol of the narra well of the deceased is painted on his chest and abdomen—in this instance, the wild duck well. This is done in order that all the dead of the well can see the one who has just died and take him immediately away to his water hole. 764

When, during the Djungguan ceremony for the great snake, Yurlunggur, and during the Narra ceremony for the other totemic emblems, a ranga is made, not only does the totem or the totem's essence enter into it through the singing of the men, but also the birimbir spirits of the dead ancestors—illustrating the close association of the clan members with their totems and dead ancestors. 776 778

The mythological ancestors who are in the well and who had some part in its formation are called old marikmo or old gatu. Their names express clearly the affiliation of the mythical men to the narra well and to the totem.

The names of the wells, as will be seen by examining the list of those belonging to the clans, pages 39-51, show the same totemic affiliation either directly or indirectly. Like the names of the mythological ancestors, they are of two types, the sacred and the camp variety. 778 103

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The sacred ones are used only during the great ceremonies, usually the Narra for the great majority of totems. It is then that all the wells of a moiety and the names of its dead ancestors are called out by the leader. The camp name is the one known by both men and women. No woman knows the sacred name of a well, or, for that matter, anything else that has to do with the sacred tribal life.

The list on page 46 shows that the chief totem of the Liaalaomir clan is a carpet snake. The names of the well are carpet snake's nose and menstruation blood, the latter referring indirectly to the actions of the snake.

The Djirin clan has the shark for a totem (see list, page 45), and the following names for its well: shark's head, ripples from a shark's swimming, hill from a tidal wave made by the shark when he created this country.

Although the well names refer to a totem which belongs to the other clans in the moiety, they also refer in particular to geographical aspects of one clan's territory, so that they have local significance. The same is true of the names of the mythological ancestors.

A man's name is taken from his male mari (mother's mother's brother) and his male marikmo (father's father). All sacred names are his marikmo's and not his mari's, but a man's camp names come chiefly from his mari; these latter also usually reflect totemic affiliation.

The symbol of the well is also painted on a man after his initiation and when he receives his totemic name in the Narra corroboree, and on a small boy when he is to be circumcised.

In addition to the relatives listed on page 16 as always included in the clan, there may be included within the clan: mari, male and female (mother's mother and mother's mother's brother); mokul rumeru (mother's mother's brother's daughter); marelker (mother's mother's brother's son); kutara, male and female (sister's daughter's son and sister's daughter's daughter); gurrong, male and female (father's sister's daughter's son and father's sister's daughter's daughter).

These relatives, too, may be blood or tribal in their relationship to ego. Men, for example, may be called brothers by ego and be clan members only remotely related to ego. The usual Murngin method of reckoning kin does not always operate within the clan, for, when there have been wrong marriages,[12] the practice of tracing descent through the mother and ignoring the father does not function. This

[12] See pages 105-106.

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degree of variation; and as far as I could determine, the chief criteria which tended toward uniformity in the language are a use and a pronunciation of the various words sufficiently varied to identify a person with his own linguistic area, and yet with enough speech uniformity to be understood by the people as a whole.

The Murngin clans are listed below, by tribe. The names of each clan "dialect," of the clan country, and of the high, medium and low (garma) totems were, with few exceptions, collected for all. The "sacred names" of water holes and of rangas (higher totems) are from the Murngin "sacred language," which is fairly extensive, including names for each individual, for all the foods eaten, et cetera. Although I was not always certain of the exact translation of the "sacred words," I did learn the identity of the things to which these words referred. A number of the "sacred words" had a number of references in a specific situation.

MURNGIN CLANS

The Murngin Tribe

1.[16]* WARUMERI[17] (red cloud) language; PUREL PUREL (red cloud) people, also MANDJIKAI (sand fly) people (phratry).

WATER HOLES: a. *Camp name:*[18] Katingalunga (blow fly); *sacred name:* Urlawarla (Northeast wind place).

b. *Camp name:* Wardawardama (crayfish); *sacred names:* Barndangwawi (black duck stone), Minniminni (black duck stone), Bullomiri (black duck stone).—This is a water hole made by the Ritarngo black duck on Malleson Island.

c. *Camp name:* Nirdaoko, Niyoryuna (untranslated).—On Tremont Island.

COUNTRY: Djellidjirri (rocks)—country around Cape Wilberforce; Yamunga—Bromby Island; Onburrer (calm sea)—English Company Islands; Nanginbura (tail of whale)—Elcho Island, 1M;[19] Kaiya (anchor rope)—Elcho Island.

[16] Arabic numerals refer to clan numbers on the map.—Since I did not go over the entire territory and since the greater part of this country has never been surveyed, some of the locations on the map may be only approximate.

[17] Starred clan names are the ones used on the map.

[18] Camp names are ordinary names used by both sexes; the sacred names are known only to men.

[19] Certain of the Murngin clans are supposed to have clan lands on Elcho Island within the general Yaernungo area. These are indicated on the map by number and "M" only.

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MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: black duck's egg, large basket (warkaitja); low: crayfish, garrawark (mythical son of barrimundi fish), barrimundi, whale, whale rib, dugong rib.

Garma: canoe mast (maraiyer), a red cloud (ripa), a stick (wallo), a line of clouds that indicates the wind will stop (dirmala), bamboo, grave post (urumo), evening star (djirpun), old woman who controls it (Kutjeringo), variety of paper-bark tree (uror), mangrove flower (uetja), silver mangrove (bandjur), fish spear (makur), heron (kormolo), leeches, a swamp, dugong, sting ray, white lily.

2. ÛRORI.URL (buffalo fly) people; *KAI.PU (line of sharp pointed clouds) language.

WATER HOLES: a. *Camp name:* Telipia (stone); *sacred names:* Dumara (when Yurlunggur [carpet snake] fell down), Luwandi (hiss of snake), Napinya (lightning: Yurlunggur's tongue)—western English Company Islands.

b. *Camp name:* Moalangul (spray of waves); *sacred names:* Kurlinyina (Djunkgao sisters stopped there), Warlinyina (sun comes up, reference to actions of the two women), Gurwaurlwa (feathered arm band [of the two sisters])—Melville Bay.

COUNTRY: Buadua (buffalo fly)—western English Company Islands; Karranun (large hooked wooden spear)—Melville Bay.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: swamp grass (darango), crab, menstruating young girl (miliyiring); low: plains goana (djinda), yam stick, tail of goana (djinda rapiri), a jungle tree from which spear throwers are sometimes made (tjota), red parrot, young girl (wirkul), mature woman (gungmun), foreskin of a man (tapo).

Garma: sea gull (djerak), wood brought in on the tide (uroko), porpoise (burlainbir), moon fish (millika), a rock (burua), young porpoise (puiapuia), morning star (barpumbir), bamboo spear, stone spear, spear thrower (mangel), variety of the wild bee (yerpain), boomerang (garliarli), white feather string (malka).

3. RIRAIDJINGO (snake's teeth) people; *KAI.PU language.

WATER HOLES: Only Garma wells.

COUNTRY: Tamballia (darkness caused by a heavy rain)—Melville Island.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: (Same as #2 for garmas, but no rangas.)

4. KAPIN (a grass used to poison fish) people; MUKKANAIMULMI language (also called *KAI.PU).

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Daringaminga (a swamp grass); *sacred*

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names: Dupera (a red parrot swimming), Dulerpa (white clay [two Djunkgao sisters painted them]), Kawia (two sisters listen to singing stick).—North of Port Bradshaw.

COUNTRY: Moalunggal—north of Port Bradshaw; Rorronga (sting ray)—west of Cape Arnhem.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: (Same as #2 and #3.)

5.*WANGURRI (fresh water) language; MANDJIKAI (sand fly) people (phratry).

WATER HOLES: a. *Camp name:* Nutjuruami (stone); *sacred names:* Bolomiri (colored stratified rocks), Yaitpi (rocks), Bangor Bangor (film over an egg), Yurkyurk (duck's waddle).—Mollison Island.

b. *Camp name:* Dalinga (white interior of a cycad palm [Banitja swallowed it]); *sacred names:* Djambarlmurro (stone fire for the palm food), Baiingnarra (Barrimundi split the water hole); Barlwarttji (leaves and sticks carried by the tide).—Southeastern Arnhem Bay.

c. *Camp name:* Tamuitpir (river mouth); *sacred name:* Puimar.

COUNTRY: Mutamil (a fresh water snake)—Mallison Island in Arnhem Bay and on Cape Newbald east of Mallison Island; Dalinga (white interior of cycad palm nut)—southeast Arnhem Bay; Tamuitpir (river mouth)—Mt. Alexander, north of Caledon Bay.

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: Tukaruma (a mythical stone-like creature who is the son of Garrawark), a mangrove log, a man's cough (narlpar), white trunked tree (guriri), black duck egg; low: garrawark, banitja (barrimundi), mangrove fish.

Garma: (See Warumeri, #1.)

6.*LUMMAMI language; MALARDORIDO (palm tree basket) people.

WATER HOLES: a. *Camp name:* Naindjaka (name of Cape Arnhem); *sacred names:* Yilkaritpi, Cape Arnhem mainland; Daraiinni (Yiritja sting ray).

b. *Camp name:* Utjingduru (whale nose); *sacred name:* Wimmerri (whale).—Small island off Cape Arnhem.

COUNTRY: Uitjingduru.—Cape Arnhem.

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: black duck's egg; large basket (workaitja); low: rib of whale, whale's fin (paddle), garrawark, and banitja.

Garma: (See Warumeri, #1.)

7.*KOMAITS (northeast wind) language; KAINYAO (a jungle fruit) people.

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WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Karkunga (eyes looking at the ground); *sacred names:* Waritpui (tied up [when two sisters tied up paper bark]), Gurwan (big trunk of a paper-bark tree), Buikwan (small pieces of bark that blow away when a large piece of bark is torn off a trunk).

COUNTRY: Karkunga (eyes looking at the ground)—Port Bradshaw, southwest of Cape Arnhem.

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: *Runga:* high: roots of paper-bark tree (tapamur); low: variety of native bee (yerpain), honey stick (garnin), orchid (djelkork), fresh water turtle, mud when turtle buries himself (minbu), a large-leafed lily (damakarla), anchor, kangaroo tail.

Garma: (See Warumeri, #1.)

8.*DARLWONGO (fresh water) language; NARKALA (barrimundi) people.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Golerttji (stake for fish trap); *sacred names:* Garngarn (caught [a ranga log was caught here in mythological times]), Ilpuru (head of Yiritja wild bee), Tapulmirri (chin of wild bee), Tamakar (leg of wild bee), Bongitja (honey).

COUNTRY: Noru (head or nose)—southeast of Arnhem Bay; Garngarn (high ground around the well).

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: (See Komaits, #7.)

9.*DJAPU people; DJAMBARPINGU (small land bird) language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Borngorlnna (variety of palm tree); *sacred name:* Turrpuitpi (sting-ray prong).

COUNTRY: Garimarla (hole when the great snake went in)—interior, north of Blue Mud Bay.

TOTEMS: *Runga:* high: sting-ray prong (damarrarwonga), shark liver (djukur), shark's blood (kaparn), head of shark (liamangiwar), shark's teeth and pandanus leaf-thorns (gurrorro), menstruating girl, woman's mat and apron (ainmara); low: shark (bultmaindji), shark's head dress (warak), white tree found in mangrove jungles (narrao), goona, plains type (djinda), goona tail, mature woman (gungman), yam stick, singing sticks (bilmal), uterus (dulla), small boy (djemerkilli).

Garma: (See Urorlurl, #2.)

10.*DJAWARK (small black clouds) people; DJAMBARPINGU (small bird) language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Bendringa (native companion); *sacred names:* Tupurla (long forked stick house), Karrimarla (carpet snake's voice).

COUNTRY: Tupurla—south of Arnhem Bay.

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MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: menstruating girl, woman's mat and apron (ainmara); low: mature woman (gungmun), young girl (wirkul), clitoris (marnbu), foreskin, cane (gurlbaurlba), goona (djinda), yam stick (ganinyiri), singing sticks (bilmal), fire (malnumba), tidal float-wood (ondoko), red parrot (gurnboko), grub in lily pond (kamerung), black ant's nest (ringdjari).

Garma: (See Ororluri, #2.)

11.*GWIYAMIL (fish place) people; KOPARPINGU (back of the neck) language.

WATER HOLES: a. *Camp name:* Milmitkutminga (yellow stone point); *sacred names:* Mantgur (fish scale)—Buckingham River.

b. *Camp name:* Gorlokna (|garrawark's| broken spear); *sacred name:* Peralmina (mangrove fish)—south of Arnhem Bay.

COUNTRY: Mantgur (fish scales)—southwest of Buckingham Bay on Buckingham River; Peralmina (mangrove fish)—south of Arnhem Bay; Elcho Island channel (11M).

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: crayfish, fresh water turtle (tukarura), mangrove log; low: garrawark, barrimundi, mangrove fish, black duck egg, black duck.

Garma: (See Warumeri, #1.)

12.*MERANGO language; DURILI (string bark) people.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Gundaikunga (chips from tree when Wongar Uré looked for honey); *sacred name:* Raimungir (|hear| frilled neck lizard hearing Uré cut the tree).

COUNTRY: Gundaikunga (tree with wild bee hive)—southwestern Arnhem Bay.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: black ant's nest, mud hole left by iguana; low: sun (wailir), sharp pointed stick found in wild bee's hive (yungun), honey (melka), black iguana, frilled neck lizard (baltjurda), young girl (wirkul), mature woman (gungmun).

13.*BIRKILI (line of high clouds) people: KOPARPINGU (back of the neck) language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Yandala (line of clouds); *sacred names:* Luinga (snake's scale), Winbara (lightning [snake's tongue]), Barkurda (snake's skin).

COUNTRY: Yandala (line of clouds)—western Arnhem Bay; Gurama (firelight)—undefined territory on north central Elcho Island.

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: snake (mondukal); low: variety of native bees, orchid (djelkork), honey stick and swat (gurnin), sway-

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grass (wirnikamu), swamp tree from which canoes are made (duwal).

Garma: (See Warumeri, #1.)

14.*DJIRIN people; DJAMBARPINGU (small land bird) language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Binyunbi (shark tail); *sacred names:* Djawarknga (spear [of man who killed the Wongar shark]), Gurella (ripples from shark swimming), Gaiwarndi (stone hill left by shark's tidal wave [see myth]), Dardanga (shark's head).

COUNTRY: Djawarlkna (man who fights by ambush)—north Arnhem Bay Peninsula; Kuranga (sleep)—northwest Elcho Island (14M).

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Djapu, #9.)

Garma: (See Urorlurl, #2.)

15.*GWIYULA people; DJAMBARPINGU (small land bird) language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Marnaitja (small catfish); *sacred name:* Marrapai (Djunkgao's rib).

COUNTRY: Marrapai (woman's rib)—mouth of the Buckingham River.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Djawark, #10.)

Garma: (See Urorlurl, #2.)

16.*NALADAER people; DJAMBARPINGU language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Maderakama (snake's crawl); *sacred name:* Mukurda ("lace" spear).

COUNTRY: Maderakama (snake's crawl)—west of Buckingham Bay.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Djawark, #10.)

Garma: (See Urorlurl, #2.)

17.*DAIUROR (Manbiri snake) people; KOPARPINGU (back of the neck) language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Djilliwirri (honeybee's nose); *sacred names:* Burungnaro (honeybee well), Djiringa (honeybee well), Daul narra (honeybee well).

COUNTRY: Djilliwirri (honeybee's nose)—southwest of Buckingham Bay.

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: variety of wild bee (gamo), cough (nalpar), banyan tree (djarnba); low: orchid (djelkork), paper-bark tree (barukala), hive in tree roots (walmunao), tree whose trunk is used for making canoes (duval), stick inside bees' nest (guiparu).

Garma: emu (urparu), the root of a vine (yokowa), a bush

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bird (piapi), opossum fur string (uinbul), small variety of stringy bark tree (garaiyurro).

18.*WULKARA (unclean water) language; MANDJIKAI (sand fly) people.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Marraniyamunguli (cycad palm's leaf); *sacred names:* Mindjiringa (sand fly), gurlmula (armlet).

COUNTRY: Langera (evening star)—Howard Island and part of adjacent mainland; Bardairinga (flat paper-bark country)—mainland southwest of Howard Island.

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Wangurri, #5.)

Garma: (See Warumeri, #1.)

19.*LIAGAOMIR (head in the mud, a reference to a shellfish) language; DING DING (sparks) people; also DJAMBARPINGU language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Laerttutna (mangrove trees); *sacred names:* Yaoer yaoer (whisper, also name of house), Marnbonga (clitoris).

COUNTRY: South of Howard Island. (See Naladaer, #16, for names.)

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Djawark, #10.)

Garma: (Do not possess this variety of totem.)

20.*LIAALAOMIR (Top [head] of a long house) language; GARLBANUK (catfish).

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Durdiella (buttocks [place where the Wawilak women sat down]); *sacred names:* Mirrirmina (snake swallows), Ditjerima (menstruation blood). (Another famous well is the Gruana.)

COUNTRY: Mirrirmina—Goyder River.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: carpet snake's head (pirlinbir), carpet snake's anus (bundji wirtit); low: caterpillar, carpet snake (yurlunggur), carpet snake's neck (wafish), carpet snake's tongue (this is also lightning, mata wirtit), an iguana, green ant (tapalain), singing stick (marliri), a palm tree (gurlwiri), ridgepole of a house (guro guro), house's rafters (milkiri), uprights (dakal dakal), forked stick used for house construction (kanbi kanbi).

Garma: (See Urorlurl, #2.)

21.*MANDELPUI (snake's spittle) language; GARLBANUK people.

WATER HOLE: *Camp names:* Mandelpuingumi (woman's language), Dariel (to raise up [snake]); *sacred name:* Mariu (throat of carpet snake).

COUNTRY: Mandelpuingumi (see language)—Goyder River.

MOIETY: Dua.

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TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Linalaomir, #20.)
Garma: (See Urorlurl, #2.)

Yaernungo (Black Cloud) Tribe

1.*KOLPA (Black cloud) people; YAERNUNGO language.

WATER HOLES: a. *Camp name:* Kataanunga (stone knife); *sacred name:* Puikapaiinni (crayfish).

b. *Camp names:* Maranama (leaves moving [from northeast wind]); Buradawart (whale rib); the two water holes on the north part of Cape Wessel Island.

c. *Camp name:* Yiringa (whale bone); *sacred names:* Bangulna (whale backbone), Yaiyuma (whale blowing)—Drysdale Islands.

COUNTRY: Martjimba (farthest point of land pointing into the ocean)—Cape Wessel; Yiringa (whale bone)—Drysdale Island, north of Elcho Island.

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Wangurri, Murngin #5.)
Garma: (See Warumeri, Murngin #1.)

2.*MURRU people; YAERNUNGO language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Mundakunga (when Djunkgao sisters sat); *sacred names:* Wangurunga (roar of tide), Djurdupula (sun).

COUNTRY: Mundakunga (buttocks)—southern end of northern Wessel Island.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: young girl (wirkul), mature woman (gungmun), woman's mat (ainmara), hawk billed turtle's penis (kurka maipern), lower leg of hawk billed turtle (maipern), snake's head (lia darpa), snake's anus (bundju darpa); low: hawk-billed turtle (maipern), mud fish (karlmata), yam stick (waitjum), red parrot feather belt (yiritpal).
Garma: (See Urorlurl, Murngin #2—only first six.)

3.*MARUNGUN (red ant hill) people; YAERNUNGO language.

WATER HOLE: (No Narra wells, only garma) on Marunga Island; on Rabuma Island (Crocodile group). *Camp name:* Garli guli (penis); *sacred name:* Mangaba (penis).

COUNTRY: Tamballia (dark before a heavy rain)—small island east of north end of Elcho Island; Mia (woman)—southwest Elcho Island; Wallera (paper-bark tree raft)—Marunga Island in Crocodile group.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: No *ranga.*
Garma: (See Urorlurl, Murngin #2—only first six.)

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4.*PERANGO (line of clouds) people; YAERNUNGO language.

WATER HOLES: a. *Camp names:* Djirdikaiinga (ceremonial object in Djungguan ceremony), Garuma (snake's hiss); *sacred names:* Guluma (snake's nose), Malpandi (snake's jaw), Daerungar (snake's back), Komurmandait (echoes of snake's roar [thunder]).—South Wessel Island.

b. *Camp name:* Djurdjunga (white paint [used by snake]); *sacred names:* Djuranelpi (bank around the water hole), Burlurlun (sound of spring water flowing).—Eastern Elcho Island.

COUNTRY: Niyakona (swallow)—Wessel Island (south); Djuernelpi (boiling water in a well)—northeastern Elcho Island.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Murru, Yaernungo #2.)

Garma: (See Urorlurl, Murngin #2—only first six.)

5.*YALUKAL people; YAERNUNGO language.

WATER HOLES: (Not collected).

COUNTRY: Kongo (mangrove tree)—central Elcho Island.

MOIETY: Yiritja.

TOTEMS: (See Warumeri, Murngin #1.)

6.*KARMALANGA (banyan tree's fruit) people; YAERNUNGO language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Guruturunga (rotten yam); *sacred name:* Gawurlinga (mud).

COUNTRY: Karlkobiri (honey swab)—Banyan Island at mouth of Goyder River.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: Miliyirin (menstruation blood), marnbu (clitoris); low: mature woman (gungmun), uncircumcised boy (dapi), parrot feather hair belt (yiritpal), young girl (wirkul), singing sticks (bilmal), jungle tree (murlolo).

Garma: (See Perango, Yaernungo #4.)

Barlamomo Tribe

1.*MARADUNGGIMI people; DJAMBARPINGU language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Kurukaknga (wild bee's head); *sacred names:* Banmala (flight of wild bee), gaiitpi (buzz of a wild bee).

COUNTRY: Bunmala (honeybee flying)—Caledon Bay.

MOIETY: Dua.

TOTEMS: *Ranga:* death adder (maringa or baranana); (see also Djapu, Murngin #9.)

Garma: (See Urorlurl, Murngin #2.)

2.*KIKI or BURILUNG people; KOPARPINGU language.

WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Maiondiji (wrapped anchor rope); *sacred*

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names: Gannal (wrapped anchor rope), murdarkara (tide pulling on anchor rope), nuiyul (anchorage).
COUNTRY: Maiondji (wrapped anchor string)—Caledon Bay.
MOIETY: Yiritja.
TOTEMS: *Ranga:* low: small snake (burulu).
Garma: (See Warumeri, Murngin #1.)

Dai (Barrimundi) Tribe

1.*MARDERPA (crocodile) people; DAI language.
WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Kakarwilia (sound of water running); *sacred names:* Dulwarrikari (swamp), burnunburnunmi (swamp grass).
COUNTRY: Dulwarrikari (swamp hole)—interior north and west of Blue Mud Bay.
MOIETY: Yiritja.
TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: Crocodile (barro), crocodile egg (lainyaer), crocodile's nest (yalo), crocodile intestinal fat (djirimbirlpirl), crocodile head (mirlkor), kangaroo tail, fire (urtja).
Garma: (See Daiuror, Murngin #17.)

2.*MARUNGUN (red ant's nest) people; DAI language.
WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Mangaia (stench of a dead man); *sacred names:* Nimaindja (knees of women), djumbulwarra (the name of the ceremonial calling out of the sacred names).
COUNTRY: Mangai (stench of a dead man)—Blue Mud Bay.
MOIETY: Dua.
TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Djapu; Murngin #9: all rangas the same, except Marungun have no shark ranga or any of the shark's body parts for totems).
Garma: (See Urorlurl, Murngin #2.)

Ritarngo Tribe

1.*BRINGEL (spear grass) people; RITARNGO (spear grass) language.
WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Garlinga (testicle of a Wongar man bitten by a catfish); *sacred name:* Burawarndji (big stone egg left by a wild duck).
COUNTRY: Marda (small trees, any species).
MOIETY: Yiritja.
TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: Kamur (big stone), kangaroo tail; low: black duck, a flat stone, duck egg, duck's nest.
Garma: (See Warumeri, Murngin #1.)

2.*WAWILAK (two mythical creator sisters) people; RITARNGO language.

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614 WATER HOLES: (Did not record, but notes show references to the two Wawilak sisters).
197 COUNTRY: Djindjikara (deep hole).
192 MOIETY: Dua.
TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Liaalaomir, Murngin #20.)
103 *Garma:* (See Urorlurl, Murngin #2.)
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Djinba (Swamp) Tribe

1.*GUNABLINGU (black goose) language; GURUMBA (black goose) people.
WATER HOLES: (Did not collect.)
COUNTRY: Burawarndji (white stone)—Goyder River.
MOIETY: Yiritja.
TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: split stones when fresh water spring flows; low: swamp snake. (They have others which were not recorded.)
Garma: goose (guamurtji), goslings (birwit), red water lily, goose egg, goose nest.

2.*KURKAMARNAPIA (flying fox's penis) people; DJINBA language.
WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Gurwa gurwa (jungle of bamboo); *sacred name:* Guruwillin (variety of palm).
COUNTRY: Mirnaitja (high hill); golambait (honeybee excrement)—upper Goyder River.
MOIETY: Dua.
TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Liaalamoir, Murngin #20.)
Garma: (See Warumeri, Murngin #1.)

Yandjinung Tribe

1.*BARLMAWI people; YANDJINUNG language.
WATER HOLE: *Camp name:* Urelnga (spirit of a snake); *sacred name:* Birimbirda (a snake's spirit).
COUNTRY: Urelnga (spirit of snake).
MOIETY: Yiritja.
TOTEMS: *Ranga:* high: munbi (mud hole of a turtle), female fresh-water turtle (minala), crayfish (takaowa); low: grebe (djarng djarng), grass under fresh water (norit), fresh water turtle, small snake (munbi), large leafed water lily (djermunda).
Garma: (See Daiuror, Murngin #17.)

2.*MILYINGI people; YANDJINUNG language.
COUNTRY: Goyder River.
MOIETY: Yiritja.
TOTEMS: *Ranga:* several varieties of unidentified fish and birds.
Garma: (See Daiuror, Murngin #17.)

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3. URKIGAINDJER (stringy bark flower) people; YANDJINUNG language.
   COUNTRY: Djimbi (vagina)—south of Cape Stewart, but not specifically located by the author.
   MOIETY: Dua.
   TOTEMS: *Ranga:* gaimbu (fish net), gurdamurko (catfish), wanduma (mud fish), baltjurda (frilled neck lizard), yungun (sharp stick found in bee hive), wirkul (young girl), gungmun (mature woman), baidjo (yam stick).
   Garma: (See Urorlurl, Murngin #2.)
4. •KURKAMULMUL people; YANDJINUNG language.
   COUNTRY: Inland southeast of Cape Stewart.
   MOIETY: Dua.
   TOTEMS: *Ranga:* singing stick (bilmal), young woman (wirkul), mature woman (gungmun), iguana; others unrecorded.
   Garma: (See Urorlurl, Murngin #2.)
5. DAWERAO
6. MANIDJIBUNG
7. •NARNARO

Burera Tribe

1. •WALLAMUNGO people; BURERA language.
   COUNTRY: Part of Millingimbi Island, Crocodile group.
   MOIETY: Yiritja.
   TOTEMS: *Ranga:* (See Wangurri, Murngin #5.)
   Garma: (See Warumeri, Murngin #1.)

There are other Burera clans which were not recorded.

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in the general topography of northeastern Arnhem Land. The clan structure is not a mere exogamic group which occupies a certain extended territory and whose people earn their living from this area. In the first place, all its female members are usually not attached to the land itself, for after reaching early adolescence they go as wives and potential mothers to other clans than their own; the wives and mothers of the local clan come from other areas and are therefore not thought of as belonging to this particular piece of land. Spatial unity is disrupted and the Murngin clan is seen to be an entirely different social entity from our modern state. Further, the economic unit of this people is not the clan but the horde. 773 614

The horde's membership is composed of men from a number of clans as well as of women from different groups. The clan composition of a horde becomes more heterogeneous during the dry season when an area can support a larger number of people, than in the rainy season when food is scarce. The male membership of the clan is seldom spatially intact except during the ritual season when all of the male members are more likely to be present than in the rainy period. The clan's so-called "ownership" of the land has little of the economic about it. Friendly peoples wander over the food areas of others and, if their area happens to be poor in food production, possibly spend more of their lives on the territory of other clans than on their own. Exclusive use of the group's territory by the group is not a part of the Murngin idea of land "ownership." The ownership of the land is more in the "nature of things," as seen by the Murngin. The land is not outside the clan but is an integral part of it. As has been said, it cannot be taken from the clan, for it is of the clan and made such by the order of existence. "Wongar made it that way and that's why we have these things today." 621 614 423

Politically the clan is almost impotent when it comes to positive action. It is impossible to obtain group action, even for the wergild, which will function to the extent that discipline can be enforced and individual action prohibited in a blood feud. The ceremonial leader is considered head man, and if physically able and of sufficient talent, he is also war leader, but his power is at an absolute minimum except as a ritual leader; it is in the field of ritual and not of government that he exercises his leadership. 614 622

The names of the country, the names of the wells, and the list of totems as well as the names of the mythological ancestors all form fundamental parts of the clan unity. All of the names of the clan 103 614 773 182 778

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103 614 773 182 778 wells, both the sacred and the camp names, refer to the totemic objects either directly or indirectly and usually describe some aspect of the clan's country or rationalize its relation to the totem. The totemic mythological ancestors generally have the same names as the well. All of these elements are unified by one or more myths. These myths in turn are dramatized by the various rituals enacted by the clanspeople so that when a man is asked what totems a particular clan possesses, he ordinarily thinks of the rituals they use and the myths the rituals portray.

The names of the clan wells either elaborate the detail of the myth as it is expressed by the totem or they give distinct additions which relate other totemic myths to the well. In no case does the name of a well have no relation to the totems of the clan.

614 778 182 The clansmen are identified with the totemic well by the fact that they come from it and are allowed to be born by the action of the totemic spirit that resides within the well; they are identified with the well because at death they will go back to it and because all of their kin who have died and those living, with whom they have had all of their social relations, are or will be either in this well into which their own soul returns or in other like clan wells; and finally, their well-being and that of their fellow clansmen and of other clans are dependent upon the proper enactment of the seasonal rituals which demonstrate the mana or power of the totem. At death not only does the soul go into the well but it also enters into the totemic emblem itself and becomes a part of it.

551 182 771 The names of the living are all taken from some part of the totemic complex and refer directly or indirectly to the totem. One exception to this is the new group of Malay terms which, however, have been sacralized by the real ancestors' possessing them, and which, after a period of taboo and when the ancestors are within the totemic water hole, are passed on to the living. Another exception to the rule is the group of nicknames, which are also inheritable by the living from the dead. The spiritual life of a Murngin, then, is entirely made up from totemic elements, and his whole participation within that part of the community which makes him a social man and separates him from the adolescent children and women is within the totemic complex itself. (This of course is a fundamental aspect of age grading and is treated under that head.) As a male social personality, a man is part of the totem, and in all his social relations with the male part

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though the dugout was capable of carrying more people than its predecessor, it did not develop into a war canoe.

The Malays gave all the islands, beaches, bodies of water, peninsulas, and other landmarks names from their own vocabulary, which the natives learned and used in addition to their own. All the locations in the whole territory which were touched by the Malay sailors have Malay as well as native terms. Men who do not know the Malay dialect usually know the Malay place names of a particular district.

Almost all the people of the Arafura country also have Malay personal names. These names were originally given them by the Malays, but they were passed by the natives to their own relatives through the custom of giving a sister's daughter's son, or a son's son, the name of a mother's mother's brother, or a father's father; and in the female line by giving the daughter's daughter or brother's son's daughter the name of a mother's mother or father's father's sister. The Murngin know which are Malay personal and place names and which are aboriginal in origin.

There were no Malay words adopted by the blacks to describe the various social institutions of the Murngin. No clan or local group, as far as the writer could determine, received a Malay name which was used by the black. No kinship term was adopted from the Malay terms, although it might be argued that the word for father (bapa) in Murngin nomenclature, being the same as the Malay word, was taken from the intruders. When it is realized that this same word bapa figures in the more central tribes as a kinship term, and that in some of these kinship systems it means older brother and in other places describes still different relatives, it will be seen that this likeness in the two languages was probably a coincidence. It could just as easily be argued that our word "papa" was taken over by the blacks and used for their word for father, since white civilization had been in contact with aboriginal Australian culture in the south and east for a considerable period of time. A visiting Malay, had he come to the Arafura country later than the white man, might have argued this were he as uncritical as many white theorists in their arguments for the diffusion of culture traits.

The Malays only slightly influenced Murngin mythology. Certain myths seem to have a possible Malay origin, or, if not Malay, then some other outside source, since they do not seem to fit into the general cultural background. For instance, the belief that a man acquires the soul of the man he has killed may be due to the transportation of the head-hunting idea from Indonesia to Australia by the Malay traders. On the other hand, it is also likely that this Indonesian idea came by way of New Guinea and then down to Australia at a much earlier period than this last, Malay contact.

Certain native myths have been somewhat modified to make a place

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

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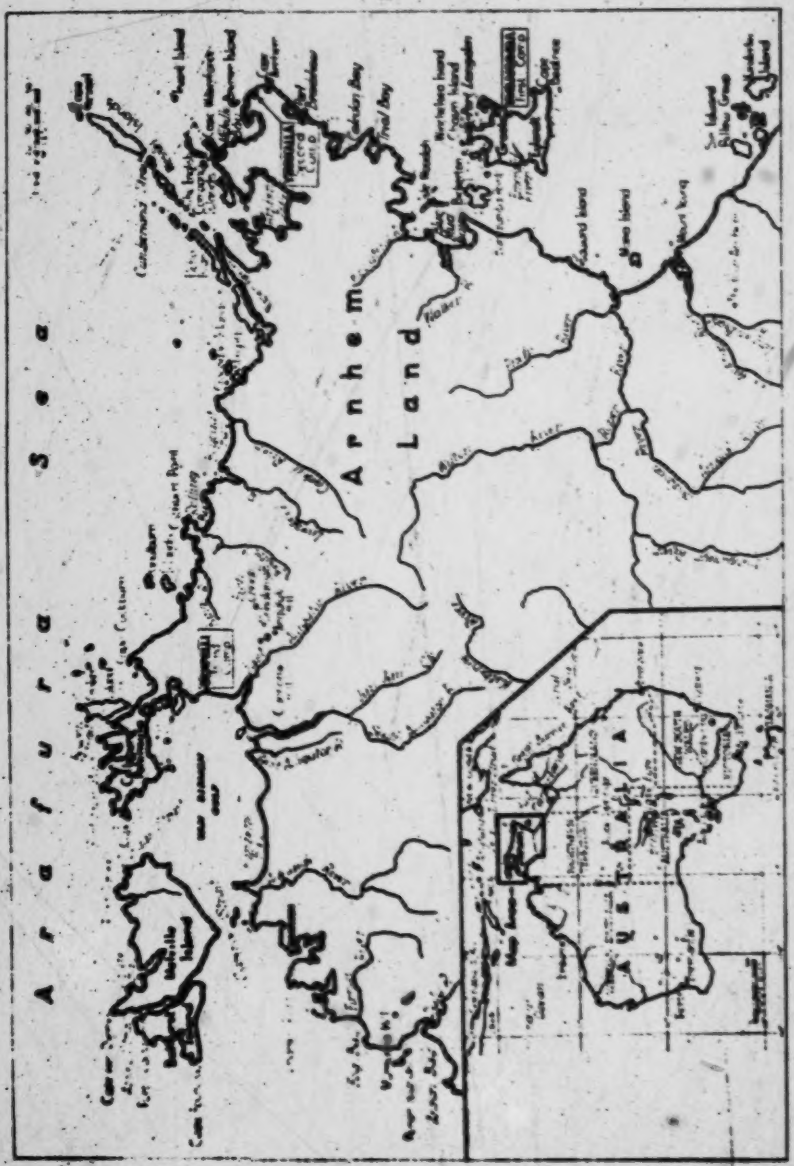

FIG. 1. Arnhem Land, showing expedition camps

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

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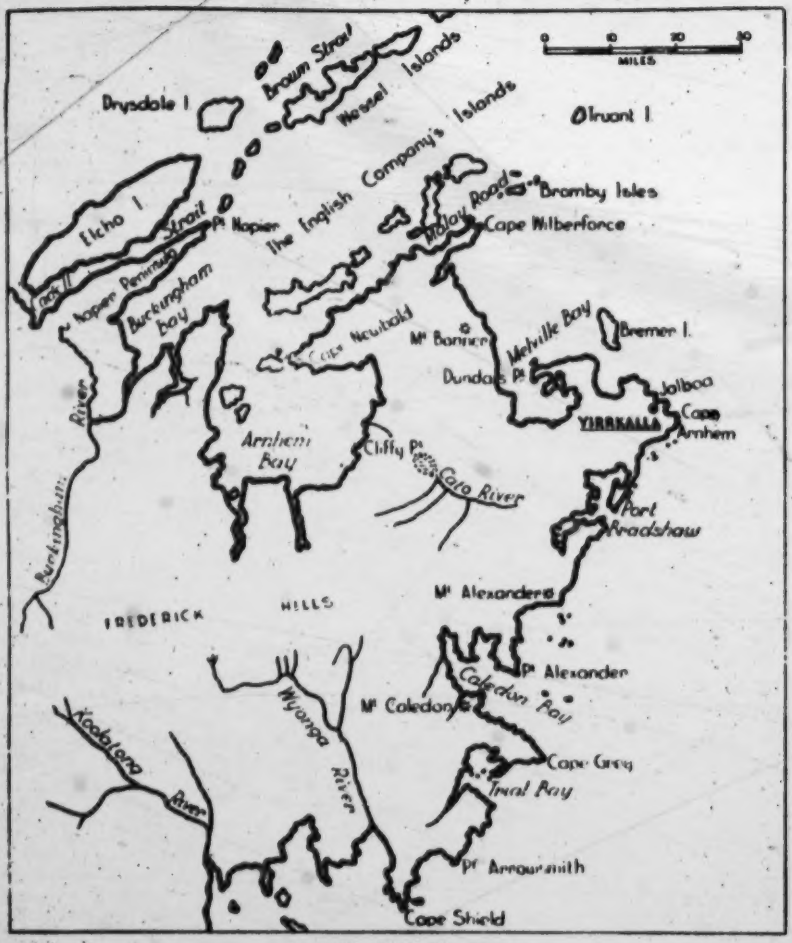

FIG. 57. Yirrkalla area

The *W'awalik* myth appears to belong more particularly to the western side of Arnhem Land, and the *Djunkgao* myth to the eastern. The former myth appears to be the more complete; in fact, in some localities the myth of *Djunkgao* actually takes on some of the elements of that of the *W'awalik* sisters (p. 278). On the eastern side of Arnhem Land *Djunkgao* is a man; on the western side, two

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

CHAPTER I

THE CULTURAL PATTERN OF NORTH-EASTERN ARNHEM LAND SOCIETY

I

a. The Geographical Background:

The main centre with which we shall be dealing here is Yirrkalla, in the far north-eastern corner of the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Reserve. The surrounding area is thickly wooded, with jungles and mangrove swamps, fresh water streams and tidal rivers, long beaches broken by sheer cliffs, and occasional islands fairly close to the shore.

Yirrkalla itself takes its name from a fresh water creek that flows into the surf beside a long white curving beach. This creek drains a wide area of lagoon and swamp, its source far back in the hilly inland. Wide grass flats, easily inundated during the monsoonal rains, and dense jungles, lie in the back country not too far from the coast line. At Yirrkalla the Methodist Overseas Mission established a station some eleven years ago: and now a Mission house on a low cliff dominates the beach, where native huts, mostly of cast-off European timber and tin, are arranged in rows. Beyond the Mission house, on a smaller beach, are other huts; and a church, store-house, dispensary and garden complete the settlement.

This Mission station is the centre for natives whose traditional home camps are at Blue Mud Bay, Trial and Caledon Bays and Port Bradshaw to the south, facing the Gulf of Carpentaria, while visitors come from Groote Eylandt, Woodah Island and Rose River. The Yirrkalla local groups belong mainly to Cape Arnhem, Bremer Island, Melville Bay, and the English Company Islands, as well as to Arnhem Bay: but natives from the Wessel and Elcho Islands, Milingimbi in the Crocodile Islands, and from the mainland to the west, do visit this region. Yirrkalla is thus a strategic base for anthropologists and missionaries who desire to contact members of various groups of a more or less similar cultural and linguistic background.

Geographically speaking, the Yirrkalla groups are comparatively isolated, for to-day only the Mission lugger calls at this depôt, with occasional visits by other Europeans who come by boat and 'plane. Yirrkalla is approximately 500 sea-miles east of Darwin, 130 miles

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CHAPTER FIVE

Jungle Lore and Etiquette

OUR front door overlooked an alluring crystal-clear stream where it joined the sea. When I asked what the name of the Yirrkala camp meant, I was told: 'Oh, that is the water where the camp is made.' This beach by the sea was a favoured camping-ground and scores of Yulengor drank from the stream. A white man drinks from a bush stream by cupping his hands, or by blowing away the dust on the surface and putting his lips to the water; but Yulengor flip the water into their mouths. Out in the bush, when we were hot and thirsty, we came to a small soak in the hills, whereupon most of the men wandered off for strips of paper-bark or large green leaves from which they drank after deftly twisting them into drinking cups. Scores of these saccules lay around the soak, where they had been used at other times.

Apt terms describe methods of drinking. 'Wiaktun' is used of the baling of a canoe, which is accomplished by throwing the water out in a shell or the cupped hands; and the same word is applied to tossing water into the mouth. 'Dthurara-luptun' is a word-picture of drinking with the lips in the stream, for 'dthurara' is a doorway, river-entrance, or human mouth, and 'luptun' is the present tense of the verb 'to wash'.

In spite of the constant use of spears and the skill necessary in handling them, accidents do occur. Marjirry, a lad of about sixteen, one day left the station for a day's hunting. He stalked a kangaroo and speared it, but missed all the

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192 [197] and a school-teacher becomes 'rorm-gurrpan-a-mirry'. Aboriginal dialects are picturesque, and the same terms are used for objects possessing some similarity; thus, twenty or more names for parts of the body are used for trees and geographical formations. A backbone is the same as a mountain chain; the nose on men, animals, and fish is the same as a peninsular, a cape, or the bow of a boat or canoe; arms, wings, limbs of trees, and tributary streams are all called 'werrna'. A main river stream is called throat. Wounds and sores are classed with holes in utensils, canoes, huts, or clothing.

When human conditions resemble natural phenomena, this process is reversed, and the adjective blunt, 'dumuk', is used for a bush track through thick scrub; a man, too, may be 'blunt' or dull of hearing or intellect and understanding; the word is also in everyday use to describe a blunt axe or knife. Hollow logs or burial posts are 'dupun', and in a mild form [578] of abuse a nomad may be called 'dupun' or empty-headed.

• 103 Scores of appropriate place-names occur throughout the country, but it is not surprising that there are also hundreds of other euphonious names having no particular significance, for along the coast and on the countless bush tracks, every waterhole, swamp, hill, river crossing, and ancient camp site has a name. 'Rungi' could be a falling tide, low tide, or an exposed beach, and there are many coastal names linked with rungi. West Arnhem Land is known for its low lying [133] swamps and mudflats, but in the north-east there is a startling change to clean, sandy beaches with bold headlands, and the latter area is called 'Rungi-Poingar'—'the place of [361] beaches'. Most camps are made on beaches or sandy patches in the bush, but a horde in Blue Mud Bay haunts an outcrop of stone and clay far out on a mangrove mud flat, and consequently their camp is known as 'Lokor-Poingar'—'the place of feet'; and the reference is to the spreading mangrove roots or feet.

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LANGUAGES, SIGNS AND SMOKE-SIGNALS

From Cape Wilberforce to Arnhem Bay the ruggedness of the coastline is exceeded only by the precipitous bluffs of the English Company's Islands near by, and the whole area is known as 'Bwartaba' or 'rocky country', 'wartaba' being the name for rocks. Cape Grey is a prominent headland in the Gulf of Carpentaria and is called 'Bokorral', 'bokor' referring to the cliff-face and also to the human forehead.

Names for birds are sound-perfect imitations of bird calls. A crow is known by the raucous 'warrk', and native-companions making a noise resembling a low-toned gargle are called 'gorral-kor'. The brown pheasant calls pleasantly on several clipped notes and is known as 'bukbuk'.

Pithy sayings are in common use, and the best known have English equivalents. 'Mata-rang' is a man who never wanders far from his horde territory, or, when infrequently visiting distant friends, is for ever anxious to return home; literally he is a stick-in-the-mud. The term is also given to an adolescent who finds his mother's company preferable to that of boys of his own age and who follows her when she hunts for food.

If a man comes into a friendly camp and wishes to pass on important news, he waits for a lull in the conversation, and remarks cryptically: 'When the tide goes out, have a look on the beach and you will find something.' His hearers are instantly alert and make an opportunity for him to tell his story. There seem to be trouble-makers in every camp, with their accusations, rumours, and quarrels, and in exasperation they may be told to 'Get out and camp by yourself till the wind cleans your hair'.

Stone Age man has an extensive sign-language or semiology, and I accumulated a vocabulary of over two hundred simple signs for common customs, names, questions, instructions, and relationships. Sign-terms are generally imitations of the subject referred to; when making the sign